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The code entry screen: the field, a countdown, attempts left and clear messages

WhatsApp & APIs

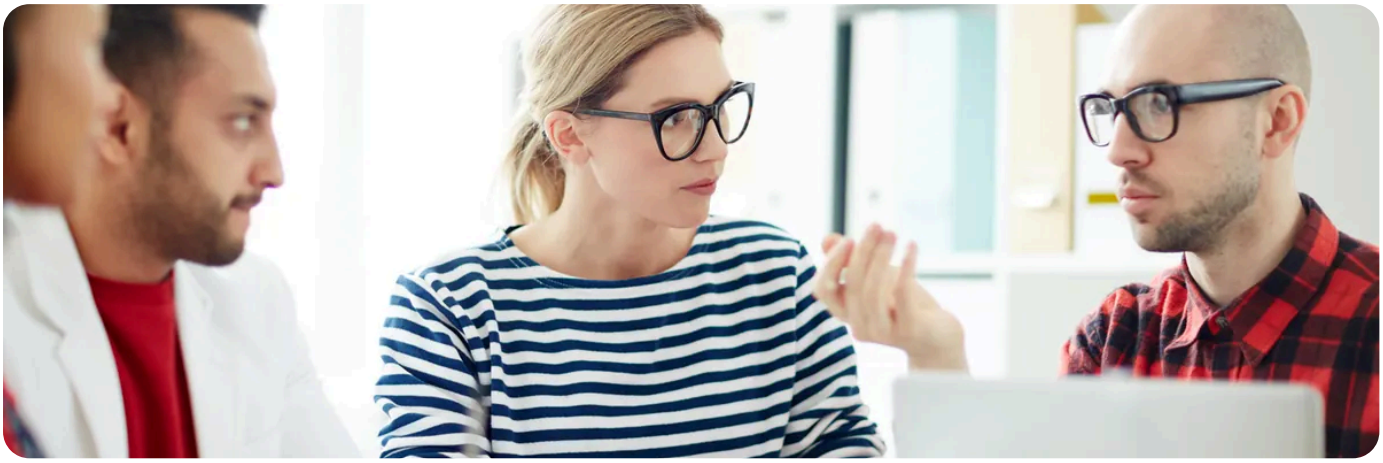
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The code entry screen: the field, a countdown, attempts left and clear messages

WhatsApp & APIs Created on **November 13, 2026** 3 min read



The short answer: the code screen is where verification either works or loses the customer. It needs four things: a field that is easy to fill in on a phone, the number the code went to (masked), an honest countdown and messages that say exactly what happened. The API gives you the data for all of this in every response.

The code field

1. **One numeric field.** With `inputmode="numeric"` the phone opens the number keypad, and with `autocomplete="one-time-code"` many phones suggest the code that just arrived by SMS.

2. **The right size.** If you asked for `length` 6, the field takes 6 digits. If you prefer six separate boxes, let people paste the whole code at once.

3. **Allow pasting and do not worry about spaces.** Spaces do not count when checking: “482 913” and “482913” are the same code.

4. **It can check on its own** when the last digit goes in, as long as the customer can see what is happening.

What to show around the field

Element	Where it comes from	Example
Where the code went	The `to` field, already masked	“We sent a code by SMS to the number ending in 567.”
Fixing the number	Your form	“Not your number? Fix it.”

Element	Where it comes from	Example
Time left	`expires_at` minus the current time	“The code is valid for another 4:12.”
Attempts left	`attempts_left`	“Wrong code. 2 attempts left.”
Requesting another code	The wait between resends you set	“You can request another in 45 seconds.”

A message for each situation

Situation	What the API says	What the customer reads
Right	`valid: true`	“Number confirmed.” and carry on
Wrong, attempts remain	`valid: false`, `pending`	“Wrong code. 2 attempts left.”
Expired	`valid: false`, `expired`	“The code has expired. Request a new one.”
No attempts left	`valid: false`, `failed`	“No attempts left. Request a new code.”
Old code	`valid: false`, `cancelled`	“Use the code from the latest SMS.”
Too many requests	`429`	“Too many codes requested. Please try again shortly.”

Do not hide the resend button for ever, and do not show it straight away.
A customer who sees no way out gives up; one who presses “Resend” five times gets five SMS and only the last works. Show it with a countdown and always say “use the code from the latest SMS”.

Remind the customer not to reply to the SMS.
Named senders cannot receive replies, and some people try. One line on screen, “Type the code you received by SMS here”, sorts it out. All the statuses are in **verification code statuses**.

RECOMMENDED

Want to build a clear verification screen with our API? See Verification SMS.

See Verification SMS →

SEE ALSO

- Verification code statuses: pending, verified, expired, failed and cancelled
- Resending, cancelling and replacing a verification code: what happens to the old one
- Confirming a phone number at sign-up with an SMS code, step by step
- Reading the verification API's answers: valid false, 409, 422 and 429
- The SMS verification code did not arrive: what to check, on your side and the customer's
- Writing the verification SMS: the code placeholder, your Sender ID and staying in one part

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